

OFFICE POLICIES & GENERAL INFORMATION AGREEMENT FOR SERVICES

This form provides you (Client) with information that is additional to that detailed in the Notice of Privacy Practices.

CONFIDENTIALITY: All information disclosed within sessions and the written records pertaining to those sessions are confidential and may not be revealed to anyone without your (client's) written permission, except where disclosure is required by law. Most of the provisions explaining when the law requires disclosure were described to you in the PHI and Disclosure Statements that are available along with this form.

WHEN DISCLOSURE IS REQUIRED BY LAW: Circumstances where disclosure is required by the law include, but are not limited to: when there is a reasonable suspicion of child, dependent or elder, abuse or neglect; and when a client presents a danger to self, to others, to property, or is gravely disabled (for more details see also the PHI form).

WHEN DISCLOSURE MAY BE REQUIRED: Disclosure may be required pursuant to a legal proceeding. If you place your mental health status at issue in litigation initiated by you, the defendant may have the right to obtain the psychotherapy records by Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW. In couple and family therapy, or when different family members are seen individually, confidentiality and privilege do not apply between the couple or among family members. Brenda Huffstutler will use her clinical judgment when revealing such information. Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW will not release records to any outside party unless she is authorized to do so by all adult family members who were part of the treatment.

EMERGENCIES: If there is an emergency during our work together, or in the future after termination, where Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW becomes concerned about your personal safety, the possibility of you injuring someone else, or about you receiving proper psychiatric care, she will do whatever she can within the limits of the law to prevent you from injuring yourself or others and to ensure that you receive the proper medical care. For this purpose, she may also contact the person whose name you have provided on the biographical sheet.

CONFIDENTIALITY OF EMAIL, AND CELL PHONE COMMUNICATION: It is very important to be aware that email and cell phone communication can be relatively easily accessed by unauthorized people and hence, the privacy and confidentiality of such communication can be compromised. E-mails, in particular, are vulnerable to such unauthorized access due to the fact that servers have unlimited and direct access to all emails that go through them. Please notify Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW at the beginning of treatment if you decide to avoid, or limit, in any way the use of any or all of the above-mentioned communication devices. Please do not use email for emergencies.

LITIGATION LIMITATION: Due to the nature of the therapeutic process and the fact that it often involves making a full disclosure with regard to many matters which may be of a confidential nature, it is agreed that should there be legal proceedings (such as, but not limited to, divorce and custody disputes, injuries, lawsuits, etc.), neither you (client), nor your attorney, nor anyone else acting on your behalf will

call on Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW to testify in court or at any other proceeding, nor will a disclosure of the psychotherapy records be requested.

CONSULTATION: Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW consults regularly with other professionals regarding her clients; however, the client's name or other identifying information is never used. The client's identity remains completely anonymous, and confidentiality is fully maintained.

TELEPHONE & EMERGENCY PROCEDURES: If you need to contact Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW between sessions, please leave a message on voicemail at (360) 836- 9715 and your call will be returned as soon as possible. Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW checks her messages periodically throughout the day, unless she is out of town. If an emergency situation arises, please indicate it clearly in your message. If you need to talk to someone right away, you can call the 24-hour Clark County Mental Health Crisis Line at (800) 626-8137, EMS (911), or go to your local hospital emergency room.

PAYMENTS: Clients are expected to pay Brenda L. Huffstutler MSW, LICSW's standard fee of \$130 at the end of each session unless other arrangements have been made per the sliding fee scale. Accounts must be paid in full and kept current to continue services. While most information can be collected with minimal time outside of a session, at times it is necessary to spend sufficient time on your concerns outside of our session. This includes telephone conversations, site visits, report writing and reading, court reports for reunification cases, consultation with other professionals, release of information, reading records, longer sessions, travel time, etc. The time associated with these services will be charged at the same rate, unless indicated and agreed otherwise. Please notify Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW if any problem arises during the course of therapy regarding your ability to make timely payments.

REUNIFICATION CASES: There are a lot of concerns that come up during reunification and co-parenting cases. As a reminder, Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW LICSW does not make court appearances as they detract time from assisting other clients and the belief she holds that the role of the therapist is to perform therapy. Often these court mandates state that parties are to split the costs of sessions. The person initiating reunification shall pay Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW and then the parties can arrange their own reimbursement system. These cases DO NOT qualify for the sliding fee scale. Any reports written for the courts are at the cost of a regular client hour - \$130. There may be numerous documents Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW may be required to read for the case as well, and this may require additional fees as can be seen in the above "PAYMENT" section. It is important to note that Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW cannot guarantee any outcomes (as can be seen below in the "PROCESS OF THERAPY/EVALUATION" section), but does ask all parties to participate and follow the court order.

MEDIATION & ARBITRATION: All disputes arising out of or in relation to this agreement to provide psychotherapy services shall first be referred to mediation, before, and as a precondition of, the initiation of arbitration. The mediator shall be a neutral third party chosen by agreement of Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW and client(s). The cost of such mediation, if any, shall be split equally, unless otherwise agreed. In the event that mediation is unsuccessful, any unresolved controversy related to this agreement should be submitted to and settled by binding arbitration in Clark County, Washington, in accordance with

the rules of the American Arbitration Association which are in effect at the time the demand for arbitration is filed. Notwithstanding the foregoing, in the event that your account is overdue (unpaid) and there is no agreement on a payment plan, Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW can use legal means (court, collection agency, etc.) to obtain payment. The prevailing party in arbitration or collection proceedings shall be entitled to recover a reasonable sum for attorneys' fees. In the case of arbitration, the arbitrator will determine that sum.

THE PROCESS OF THERAPY/EVALUATION: Participation in therapy can result in a number of benefits to you, including improving interpersonal relationships and resolution of the specific concerns that led you to seek therapy. Working toward these benefits, however, requires effort on your part. Psychotherapy requires your very active involvement, honesty, and openness in order to change your thoughts, feelings, and/or behavior. Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW will ask for your feedback and views on your therapy, its progress, and other aspects of the therapy and will expect you to respond openly and honestly. Sometimes, more than one approach can be helpful in dealing with a certain situation. During evaluation or therapy, remembering or talking about unpleasant events, feelings, or thoughts can result in you experiencing considerable discomfort or strong feelings of anger, sadness, worry, fear, etc., or experiencing anxiety, depression, insomnia, etc. Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW may challenge some of your assumptions or perceptions or propose different ways of looking at, thinking about, or handling situations that can cause you to feel very upset, angry, depressed, challenged, or disappointed. Attempting to resolve issues that brought you to therapy in the first place, such as personal or interpersonal relationships, may result in changes that were not originally intended. Psychotherapy may result in decisions about changing behaviors, employment, substance use, schooling, housing, or relationships. Sometimes a decision that is positive for one family member is viewed quite negatively by another family member. Change will sometimes be easy and swift, but more often it will be slow and even frustrating. There is no guarantee that psychotherapy will yield positive or intended results. During the course of therapy, Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW is likely to draw on various theoretical approaches according, in part, to the "problem" that is being treated and her assessment of what will best benefit you. These approaches include, but are not limited to, being trauma informed, behavioral, cognitive-behavioral, psychodynamic, solution focused, system/family, mindfulness-based, developmental (adult, child, family), and/or psycho-educational.

DISCUSSION OF TREATMENT PLAN: Within a reasonable period of time after the initiation of treatment, Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW will discuss with you (client) her working understanding of the problem, treatment plan, therapeutic objectives, and her view of the possible outcomes of treatment. If you have any unanswered questions about any of the procedures used in the course of your therapy, their possible risks, Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW's expertise in employing them, or about the treatment plan, please ask and you will be answered fully. You also have the right to ask about other treatments for your mental health condition and their risks and benefits. If you could benefit from any treatment that Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW does not provide, she has an ethical obligation to assist you in obtaining those treatments.

TERMINATION: As set forth above, after the first couple of meetings, Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW will assess if she can be of benefit to you. If at any point during psychotherapy, Brenda L.

Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW assesses that she is not effective in helping you reach the therapeutic goals, she is obliged to discuss it with you and, if appropriate, to terminate treatment. In such a case, she would give you alternative referrals that may be of help to you. If you request it and authorize it in writing, Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW will talk to the psychotherapist of your choice in order to help with the transition. If at any time you want another professional's opinion or wish to consult with another therapist, Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW will assist you in finding someone qualified, and, if she has your written consent, she will provide them with the essential information needed. You have the right to terminate therapy at any time. If you choose to do so, Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW will offer to provide you with names of other qualified professionals whose services you might prefer.

DUAL RELATIONSHIPS: Not all dual relationships are unethical or avoidable. Therapy never involves sexual or any other dual relationship that impairs Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW's objectivity, clinical judgment, or therapeutic effectiveness that can be exploitative in nature. Vancouver is a relatively small area and sometimes clients know each other and Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW from the community. Consequently, you may see someone you know in the waiting room. or Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW out in the community. Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW will never acknowledge working therapeutically with anyone without written permission. Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW will discuss with you, as a client, the often-existing complexities, potential benefits, and difficulties that may be involved in such relationships. Dual or multiple relationships can enhance therapeutic effectiveness, but can also detract from it and often it is impossible to know that ahead of time. It is your, the client's, responsibility to communicate to Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW if the dual relationship becomes uncomfortable for you in any way, and she will always listen carefully and respond accordingly to your feedback. Brenda L. Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW will discontinue the dual relationship if she finds it interfering with the effectiveness of the therapeutic process or the welfare of the client and, of course, you can do the same at any time.

CANCELLATION: Since the scheduling of an appointment involves the reservation of time specifically for you, a minimum of 24 hours (one days) notice is required for rescheduling or canceling an appointment. The full fee will be charged for sessions missed without such notification.

SESSION LENGTH: Sessions are 50 minutes unless otherwise stated or arranged.

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~ **Counseling For Serenity, LLC with Brenda Huffstutler, MSW, LICSW** ~

Sliding Fee Scale

In order to bill insurance, I am required to share some of your personal health information with insurance providers. This can include diagnosis and justifications for those diagnosis, as well as updates in progress for continued service. There are also many aspects of therapy that are also not covered by insurance. For those not billing insurance, I offer a sliding fee scale upon request. For those out of network, I am happy to provide a Superbill of paid transactions. I also understand that choosing mental health wellness through therapy can be a financial hardship, which is why the sliding fee scale ranges from \$50-\$130. If there is no other financial arrangement, the hourly rate is \$130 an hour.

If you feel as though you are in need of a financial hardship arrangement, please check the box that fits your monthly household gross income below. This is reassessed every February.

- \$1700 and less = \$50/hour
- \$2100 and less = \$55/hour
- \$2500 and less = \$60/hour
- \$2900 and less = \$65/hour
- \$3300 and less = \$70/hour
- \$3700 and less = \$75/hour
- \$4100 and less = \$80/hour
- \$4500 and less = \$85/hour
- \$4900 and less = \$90/hour
- \$5200 and less = \$100/hour
- \$5500 and less = \$110/hour
- \$5800 and less = \$120/hour
- \$6100 and up = \$130/hour